Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method of preparing a fuel cell including a proton conductor film layer comprising the steps of:

providing the proton conductor film layer having a surface and including a material capable of conducting protons; and

forming a catalyst layer having a metal component on at least a portion of the surface of the proton conductor film layer, wherein a plurality of fine particles of a material different than the metal component are added to the surface of the proton conductor film layer prior to forming the catalyst layer thereon, and wherein the fine particles are removed subsequent to forming the catalyst layer to form one or more ventilation openings.

Claim 8 (original): The method according to Claim 7 wherein the step of forming the catalyst layer includes forming the catalyst layer by any one of a sputtering process, a vacuum deposition process and a chemical vapor deposition process.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method according to Claim ~~9~~7 wherein the fine particles have a particle size that is greater than a thickness of the catalyst layer.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to Claim ~~9~~7 wherein the fine particles are composed of silica.

Claim 12 (original): The method according to Claim 11 wherein the step of removing the fine particles includes removing the fine particles from the proton conductor film layer by any one of an ion milling process and an etching process employing at least one of a fluorine-containing solution and a fluorine-containing gas.

Claim 13 (original): The method according to Claim 7 wherein the fine particles comprise tin oxide.

Claim 14 (original): The method according to Claim 13 wherein the step of removing the fine particles includes removing the fine particles from the proton conductor film layer by any one of an ion milling process and an etching process employing at least one of a fluorine-containing solution and a fluorine-containing gas.